

James O. Ford
President, Black Business Association of Mississippi
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Chairman Kevin Martin
Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate
Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Robert McDowell
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Federal Communications Commission
The Portals
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Support BellSouth / AT&T Merger, WC Docket No. 06-74

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing you on the behalf of the Black Business Association of Mississippi to ask for your quick approval of the merger of AT&T and BellSouth. This merger combines two of America's most respected companies, companies with complementary strengths and a heritage of philanthropic and volunteer support to the African-American community.

African-American individuals and businesses are an important and fast growing segment of Mississippi's economy. We are increasingly dependent upon advanced broadband technologies to grow our businesses, educate our children and enhance the quality of our lives.

To ensure greater availability of broadband services to the African-American community, the Black Business Association of Mississippi strongly encourages prompt approval of the merger of BellSouth and AT&T. The merger promises to bring about *affordable* and *universal* broadband access for all of our citizens, including those in low income and rural areas who need it the most. This will greatly enrich the lives and economic prosperity of all of our citizens.

I urge the Commission to quickly approve the merger of AT&T and BellSouth so that African-American businesses and consumers can soon benefit from the promise of affordable and widely available broadband technology.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

James O. Ford
President, Black Business Association of Mississippi

cc: Marlene Dortch, Commission Secretary